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Pioneer
Women of
Wyoming



JOHNSON

By FREDERICK C. JOHNSON, M. D.

Member of the Wyoming Historical Society, New England Genealogical
Society, Moravian Historical Society, Minster
Valley Historical Society, etc.

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

1901.



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THE

Pioneer Women of Wyoming,

AN ADDRESS BEFORE THE WYOMING
VALLEY CHAPTER,
D. A. R.,

By FREDERICK C. JOHNSON, M. D.

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The Pioneer Women of Wyoming.

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The part woman plays in the establishing of a new settlement is not much dwelt upon by the historian. This fact does not imply that her work is unappreciated, but being domestic in character it does not often furnish material for the chronicler.

There is no field where woman's share of labor and suffering has been greater than in the pioneer community, and this has been pre-eminently true of Wyoming. She has borne the burden and heat of the day as bravely and uncomplainingly as ever her husband did, and there have even been times when she has shouldered the musket and wielded the woodman's ax. She has gone into an almost pathless wilderness infested with cruel savages, she has helped establish a home there, children have come to gladden her life and she has seen happy days there even in the forest.

Of her devotion to her family, of her self-sacrifice, of her undaunted courage, yes, of her heroism, we cannot say too much.

Women have seen husbands and sons murdered before their very eyes, have had their little children torn from their arms and carried away, their homes and possessions given to the flames and some of these pioneer mothers of Wyoming have themselves been tortured and killed or carried into a captivity worse than death.

Not only have they suffered every hardship at the hands of blood-thirsty barbarians, but they and their little ones have been driven from their homes again and again by foes of their own race and blood, almost as cruel as the savages themselves. Yet the pioneer mother of Wyoming was willing to undergo all these privations and many more that she might lend her help in building up a home for those dependent on her, who were dearer to her than her own life.

FIRST MASSACRE.

The women of Connecticut were early in Wyoming to share the perils and privations with their husbands and to do their part in making a home in a wilderness which was infested with wild animals and with even more savage human foes. You all remember that the first attempt at settlement was made in 1762, the Wyoming region being claimed by the Susquehanna Company under Connecticut. No women so far as I know accompanied these first settlers, who in that year went to Wyoming from Connecticut and in the fertile flat lands along the Susquehanna, which required not the woodman's ax, planted their crops. In the following spring they returned with the purpose of making permanent settlement. Some twenty families brought with them all their farming utensils and household possessions, their wives and children as well. Thus in 1763 did our pioneer mothers first see this fair valley, though it would have been better if their advent had taken place a few years later, for hardly had their crops been gathered than the infant settlement was laid waste by the savages. Unprepared for resistance, about twenty men fell and were scalped. Even the women did not escape the cruelty of the savages.

Parshall Terry's narrative gives us the names of two of the women who were killed: Mrs. Daniel Baldwin and Zuriah Whitney. The atrocity of the savages is learned from the following, appearing in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for November, 1763:

"Our party under Captain Clayton has returned from Wyoming, where they met with no Indians, but found the New Englanders who had been killed and scalped a day or two before they got there. They buried the dead, nine men and a woman, who had been most cruelly butchered; the woman was roasted and had two hinges in her hands, supposed to be put in red hot and several of the men had awls thrust into their eyes, and spears, arrows and pitchforks

sticking in their bodies. They burnt what houses the Indians had left and destroyed a quantity of Indian corn. The enemy's tracks were up the river."

The attack was a surprise, the New Englanders having found no savages in the valley, although Teedyuscung was living there quietly with a few of his people. It has been claimed by some that the destruction of the settlement was at the instigation of the Pennsylvania authorities, but it is now certain, as Dr. Egle has shown, that "the infamous transaction was conceived and carried out by those infernal savages from New York, the Cayugas and Oneidas," who had repudiated the sale of Wyoming to Connecticut in 1754 and were now carrying out their threats of vengeance upon the "intruders." It is true that Governor Hamilton of Pennsylvania had previously issued proclamations warning the Connecticut people not to incur the displeasure of Pennsylvania and the Indians by taking possession of the Wyoming lands, but there is nothing to indicate that the Pennsylvania authorities had the slightest connection with this first massacre of Wyoming.

Immediately after the fearful blow was struck, the women and children joined in wild flight to the mountains. As Charles Miner says, "language cannot describe the sufferings of the fugitives as they traversed the wilderness, destitute of food or clothing, on their way to their former homes."

PERMANENT OCCUPANCY.

So complete was the destruction of the settlement in 1763, that six years elapsed before a further attempt at occupying Wyoming was made. Meanwhile the Indians, who had years before sold the Wyoming lands to Connecticut, repudiated the sale of 1754 and at a council held at Fort Stanwix, New York, in 1768, sold the disputed region to Pennsylvania. And now commenced an internecine struggle between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, which was waged throughout the rest of the century, and which was never interrupted, except during the Revolutionary war,

when by common consent both parties suspended their local strife and joined in a common defense against the growing oppressions of Great Britain.

The year 1769 marked the next attempt at the settlement of Wyoming and the pioneer mothers were not left behind. The first Connecticut settlers—40 in number—arrived in the dead of winter, the month of February. They had been provided by the Susquehanna Company with land and farming utensils, they agreeing to defend the valley against the claimants under Pennsylvania. They were led by Col. Zebulon Butler, a veteran of the French and Indian wars. But the Pennsylvania claimants were ahead of them, having arrived the month previous.

Adopting tactics similar to those of Connecticut, the Pennsylvania proprietaries had executed a lease of certain lands in Wyoming Valley to Stewart, Ogden and Jennings for seven years, upon condition that they should establish an Indian trading house there and defend the valley from encroachment. I will not dwell upon the conflicts between the rival claimants during this first year of the settlement, other than to say that the Connecticut people were three times expelled. Each time they returned, but finally they surrendered and agreed to withdraw from the valley. I quote from Miner:

"Taking up their melancholy march, men, their wives and little ones, with such of their flocks and herds as could be collected, with aching hearts took leave of the fair plains of Wyoming."

During the second and third years of the settlement hostilities were carried on with great vigor. The Connecticut people were expelled again and again, only to return when least expected, and some lives were lost on both sides. The valor and persistency of the Connecticut people were rewarded, and by September, 1771, the Proprietary Government had to admit that it was beaten. Connecticut now became master of the situation, but only for a time. It was only a truce, for while the Connecticut people had obtained possession of the valley they could not

hope to retain it long, for Connecticut was making a mild disavowal to Pennsylvania of her responsibility for any hostile measures of the Susquehanna Company.

Now that the war—called the First Pennamite War—was believed to be over, and the Connecticut settlers were confident Pennsylvania would not renew the attack, preparations were made for a permanent settlement.

During the two years that followed Connecticut receded from her vacillating policy in regard to the Wyoming settlement, to the extent that she officially recognized the settlement and formally established jurisdiction—certainly a great advantage for the settlers who had fought so hard for possession during the First Pennamite War.

"The stern alarms of war having been succeeded by the sweet songs of peace," as Miner so gracefully puts it, the brave pioneer woman again made her appearance in the Susquehanna settlement. Up to 1772 there were never more than one hundred and thirty men in Wyoming at any one time and in May of that year there were only half a dozen women in Wilkes-Barre. These were: Mrs. James McClure, Mrs. Bennett, Mrs. Jabez Sill, Mrs. Thomas Bennett, Mrs. Hickman, Mrs. Dr. Joseph Sprague, and the latter's daughter, afterwards Mrs. Phoebe Young.

Pioneer life was fraught with many perils and owing to the danger from the Indians, the settlers sought the shelter of the rude forts.

Let us see how they lived at Wilkes-Barre. The stockade was constructed of a wall of upright timbers set in the ground side by side.

FIRST WOMAN PHYSICIAN.

All around in the inside, against the wall of upright logs, were one-story huts. Mrs. Dr. Joseph Sprague kept boarders, but she must have been hard pressed for supplies in that early day. There was no mill nearer than the Delaware and it was necessary to use corn meal as a chief article of diet. This was made in a mortar, that is, a stump hollowed out by burning, and operated by a pestle attached

to a spring pole. In this could be made a rude flour of corn, or wheat, or rye. Whether the labor of operating this primitive device fell on the men or the women, history does not tell. Sometimes Mrs. Sprague's husband (who was the first physician in the young settlement,) would saddle his horse and go by the bridle-path to the mill on the Delaware and bring back some wheat flour, which was held in great store and devoted to the making of dainties for a wedding or other gala occasion. On such trips he would also bring back spices, rum and other articles which helped make merry when opportunity offered or occasion required. Mrs. Sprague's table was well supplied with vension and shad, but salt was scarce. There were some friendly Indians in the valley, converts of the Moravian missionaries, and they supplied the fort with game. Her table and chairs and beds were all of home construction, for as yet little or no furniture had been taken into the settlement. Mrs. Sprague's house, small at best, was the largest in the stockade. The little houses of Captain Zebulon Butler and Col. Nathan Denison, both young men, adjoined one another. Next was the store of Matthias Hollenback, then a young man of twenty, who had brought a small stock of goods from Lancaster and who was destined to become an important factor in developing the commerce of the Susquehanna River.

The Wilkes-Barre Advertiser, of April 15, 1814, notes that Mrs. Eunice Sprague died on the 12th, aged 82 years, but beyond the mere statement that she was one of the first settlers of this place, gives no particulars as to her interesting career. Her maiden name was Eunice Chapman, and she was a native of Colchester, Conn. Dr. Hollister thus describes her in his history: "She was a worthy old lady, prompt, cheerful and successful, and at this time (1785) the sole accoucheur in all the wide domain now embraced by Luzerne, Lackawanna and Wyoming Counties. Although of great age, her obstetrical practice as late as 1810 surpassed that of any physician in this portion of Pennsylvania. For attending a confinement case, no matter how distant the journey, how long or fatiguing the detention, this sturdy

and faithful woman invariably charged one dollar for services rendered, although a larger fee was never refused if any one was able or rash enough to offer it."

By an earlier marriage at Sharon, N. Y., Mrs. Sprague was the mother of Phoebe Poyner Young. The latter was one of the fugitives from the massacre of Wyoming, and was one of a party of seven women and children who escaped down the river to Harrisburg in a canoe. Mrs. Young died in 1830 at the age of 89 years. Her recollections were largely used by the earlier historians of Wyoming Valley.

I quote from a newspaper article written a few years ago by the late Wesley Johnson:

"Mrs. Sprague was in all probability the first female doctor to practice medicine in these parts. I do not myself remember her, but often when I was a small boy, heard the old people speak of 'Granny Sprague' as a successful practitioner of midwifery and of the healing art among children. Mrs. Dr. Sprague's residence and office, which I well remember, was a one-story log house on the corner of Main and Union streets, then known as Granny Sprague's corner, where the Kesler block now stands. The old log house was demolished long years ago, but the cellar was plainly to be seen up to the time of erecting the present block of brick buildings. Mrs. Sprague was the mother of 'Aunt Young,' who lived in a small one-story frame house on Canal street, still standing, a short distance below Union street, who used to tell us boys how she often listened to the cry of wild cats and wolves in the swamp in front of her place, about where the line of several railroads pass up the valley."

AN EARTHLY PARADISE.

Miner says that 1772 was "a transition year, full of undefined pleasure flowing from the newness and freshness of the scene, a comparative sense of security, the exultation of having come off victorious, and the influx from Connecticut, when the beautiful valley must be shown to the new come wives and daughters who had been told so much of its loveli-

ness. The year passed without civil suit or crime and may be considered as a season of almost unalloyed happiness."

Amid such joyous scenes what more natural than that our pioneer mothers should love and be loved. The first to require the services of the new pastor who had come to Wilkes-Barre, was Miss Betsey Sill.—The happy groom was Nathan Denison, a young man who was destined to play an important part in the settlement.

But the gladness and plenty in 1772 was to be followed by scarceness and sorrow in the succeeding year. The winter (of 1773) had made sorry inroads into the supply of provisions and in February men had to cross the mountains, fifty miles, to the Delaware for supplies. There were only rude roads and no bridges and the sufferings of those who had volunteered for the journey were intense.

The straitened housewife welcomed the arrival of spring, for she could abundantly supply her table with shad when the fishing season came. The spring brought food, but with it came a pestilence that filled the homes of some of the pioneer mothers of Wyoming with bitter anguish. Colonel Zebulon Butler lost his wife and his little son. They were both laid to rest on the Old Redoubt hill. This was his first wife, Miss Anna Lord of Lyme, Conn., whom he had married in 1760.

Who can tell the joy the women of the settlement must have experienced when in 1773 a grist mill was erected. Up to this time they had been restricted to the use of home-made flour and meal, ground from wheat or rye or corn in primitive mortars. The only milled flour they had was laboriously brought over from the settlement on the Delaware. The enterprising settler to whom the women owed so much was Nathan Chapman, who built a mill at the mouth of Mill Creek. The crude machinery was brought up the river in one of Mr. Hollenback's boats. Up to this time the women had no furniture except that which was chopped out of timber. The habitations were constructed of logs, for there was as yet no lumber in the settlement. But now a saw mill was erected and henceforth the good housewife could have tables

and shelves, floors and many other things which her pioneer heart yearned for. The saw mill was erected on Mill Creek, just below Chapman's mill and it was the first saw mill whose hum had ever been heard on the upper Susquehanna. This was in the fall of 1773.

A TORY ROMANCE.

This old Chapman mill had a little romance that entitles it to a place in a consideration of the pioneer women of Wyoming. Chapman sold his mill property to one Adonijah Stanbury, a Delaware man, whose course was such as to create suspicion that he was no friend to the Connecticut claimants, in short that he was an enemy in disguise. Our forefathers had the faculty of making things too hot for Tory suspects and they accordingly resorted to all sorts of annoyances to get rid of him.

At this juncture a young man, true to the Connecticut interest, fell in love with Stanbury's daughter, married her and bought the mill, the only one in Wyoming, from his father-in-law, who then made everybody happy by leaving the settlement.

In this year, 1773, the women of the little colony had an accession to their number in the person of the wife of the minister, Rev. Jacob Johnson. Her husband had come on the ground the year previous and in August, 1773, he was formally invited by the Wilkes-Barre settlers to locate among them as a preacher of the gospel. He came from Groton, Conn., his wife being Mary Giddings, who was of the same family as J. R. Giddings, the noted anti-slavery congressman. He was accompanied from Connecticut by his daughter, Lydia, who became the second wife of Col. Zebulon Butler.

Not only did the settlers provide for a gospel ministry, but the pioneer mothers were not compelled to see their children, even on this distant frontier, grow up in ignorance, for free schools were established, to be maintained at the public expense. As Miner says: "These votes, thus early in the settlement, passed in the midst of poverty and dangers, may

be referred to by the descendants of these pilgrim fathers, [and I will add pilgrim mothers] with honest pride. They will remain to all enduring time monuments of religious zeal, and their earnest desire to advance the intellectual and moral conditions of their children."

Two years of repose, (1772-1773) says Miner, presented no event more exciting than the ordinary occurrences of peace, domestic prosperity, unalloyed joy and gladness. Early in 1774 Connecticut assumed jurisdiction and Wyoming now became the town of Westmoreland, attached to the County of Litchfield, Conn. Advocates of law and order every one of them, this friendly action of the mother state filled them with enthusiasm. It stamped all their former claims as legal and right and they looked forward to a secure and happy future.

Miner says the state of pleasurable excitement of this period tinges the whole with romance. Contrasted with the ills that awaited them the lines of Gray recur:

"Fair laughs the morn, and the soft zephyr blows,
While proudly rowing o'er the azure realm,
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes.
Youth on the Prow and Pleasure at the helm,
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That hushed in grim repose, expects his evening prey."

The year 1775 witnessed a continuance of prosperity. The housewife was no longer handicapped by the pioneer methods of earlier days. Her husband, thanks to his industry and a prolific virgin soil, was able to furnish an abundance of food and there was plenty of wool which she might spin and weave into garments, not very ornamental, but strong and serviceable, sufficient for her family's needs. Cattle and sheep grazed on the hillsides and there was plenty of milk, butter, cheese, beef and mutton. Her children now had schools provided and on Sunday—a strictly Puritan Sabbath,—she and her husband and little ones could attend the preaching services. But as yet there were prowling savages on the mountains and the men must perforce carry their fire-arms, whenever they ventured away from home.

The rigid Puritanism of that early day is well shown by the fact that a pioneer woman, Mary Pritchard, is recorded on the court dockets, as having been taken before a magistrate (1782) and compelled to pay a fine of 5 shillings for the offense of going unnecessarily from her domicile on the Lord's Day. Verily the times have changed.

The strictness of the New England Sabbath was the subject of considerable satire elsewhere. In an old poem it was said that God had thought one day in seven sufficient for rest, but in New England men had improved on this and set apart a day and a half :

" And let it be enacted further still,
That all our people strict obey our will ;
Five days and half shall men and women too
Attend their business and their mirth pursue.
But after that no man without a fine
Shall walk the streets or at a tavern dine.
One day and a half 'tis requisite to rest
From toilsome labor and a tempting feast.
No barber, foreign or domestic bred,
Shall e'er presume to dress a lady's head ;
No shop shall spare, half the preceding day,
A yard of riband or an ounce of tea.
Henceforth let none, on peril of their lives,
Attempt a journey or embrace their wives."

OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION.

The outbreak of the Revolution was the signal for a patriotic response on the part of the settlers at Wyoming and in town meeting. It was voted to propose a truce with the Pennsylvania claimants, that both sides might join in the common defense of their country. We can rest assured that the pioneer women of Wyoming had a part in urging this patriotic step and in joining their husbands in preparations for war against the oppression of the mother country.

In 1775 the women of Wyoming had their attention drawn from their own troubles to the distress of other women less fortunate than themselves. The olive branch which the Connecticut settlers had offered to the Pennsylvania claimants, in order that both might join for the defense of their common liberty, resulted to a large extent in a sus-

pension of hostilities, but did not do so entirely. A proprietary expedition under Plunkett had been sent to destroy the settlement of Connecticut people on the West Branch. The expedition accomplished all that was hoped. The buildings were burned, the spoils divided among the captors, the men imprisoned at Sunbury jail, while the women and children made their way through the forest as best they could to the nearest settlement, which was Wyoming. And there the fugitives received that succor of which they so much stood in need. The hospitality of the women of Wyoming was unstinted and these poor creatures, whose homes were destroyed and husbands imprisoned, had their sufferings mitigated in a manner that brought great cheer to their aching hearts.

Plukett next turned his attention toward the North Branch and in the dead of winter sent an expedition to subdue Wyoming. Congress sought by a resolution to put a stop to the movement, as the common safety was imperiled, but Plunkett was so flushed by his victory on the West Branch that he could not be dissuaded from advancing. It need only be said that the Wyoming settlers were ready for him, and having entrenched themselves three hundred strong in the rocks of the Nanticoke Gap, Plunkett's expedition was ignominiously defeated and driven back down the river in utter confusion with loss of life on both sides.

Just how many were widowed or orphaned by this engagement is not recorded, but there were several widows who were left in such straightened circumstances that funds had to be raised by public subscription for their assistance. These were the widows Baker, Franklin and Ensign. There may have been others whose circumstances were such that they would not require public aid. Miner thinks our people had six or eight killed and thrice that many wounded. The sorrow in the homes of the women of Wyoming, thus caused by this heartless invasion in the interest of the Pennsylvania land owners, can be better imagined than described.

We, who enjoy the blessings of immunity from the small-pox through so simple a measure as vaccination, can

have little conception of the horror of the situation when that dreaded malady became epidemic in the Wyoming settlement, as it did in the summer of 1777. The women had to fight the disease at a disadvantage, being deprived of the assistance of their husbands and sons, who were away in the Revolutionary service. A citizen of the valley, Jeremiah Ross, had become exposed to the disease in Philadelphia and his sickness, after his return to Wilkes-Barre, was speedily fatal. From this one case the disease became epidemic and pesthouses were established, half a mile from traveled roads. To these houses all who were to be inoculated had to repair and remain there until recovery. To what extent the disorder prevailed there is no way of knowing, though the prompt measures employed and vigorously enforced prevented its serious spread.

WYOMING A DEFENSELESS OUTPOST.

The year of 1777 closed with nearly all the able bodied men of Wyoming away in the public service. The remainder, in dread of the savages, were building stockades, and this without compensation. The aged men were formed into companies. Small-pox was abroad. Connecticut had made a levy of £2,000. A gloomy outlook indeed. Yet at a town meeting a measure was adopted which challenges admiration. At a meeting legally warned and held December 30, 1777, it was voted to supply the soldiers' wives and the soldiers' widows with the necessaries of life.

It may be interesting to note some of the prices prevailing at that time, such as would affect our pioneer women.

Yarn stockings, a pair	10s.
Spinning women, per week	6s.
Beef, a pound	7d.
Good dinner at tavern	2s.
Metheglin, per gallon	7s.
Shad, apiece	6d.
Yard wide check flannel	8s.
Yard wide white flannel	5s.
Yard wide tow and linen	6s.
Eggs, per dozen	8d.

Justice and gratitude demand a tribute to the praiseworthy spirit of the wives and daughters of Wyoming. While their husbands and fathers were on public duty, the women cheerfully assumed a large portion of such labor as they could do. They planted, made hay and husked corn. Besides this they leached their ashes for making saltpetre with which to produce gun powder for the public defense. For be it remembered that the companies enlisted in Wyoming had to furnish their own arms and ammunition. Mr. Hollenback had brought a large mortar to the settlement and in this saltpetre, charcoal and sulphur were pounded up together so as to make powder. This description of the making of powder was given Mr. Miner by Mrs. Bethia Jenkins, an eye witness.

As the season advanced, the women and children were put in great peril by the threatened invasion of British and Indians from Niagara, and the officers and men in Washington's army pleaded to be allowed leave of absence that they might hasten to the defense of their families. On the ground that the public safety required their presence at the front the permission was not granted. As Miner says: "History affords no parallel of the pertinacious detention of men under such circumstances." Wives wrote to their husbands, begging them to come home and many responded to the piteous call, though unable to obtain permission to do so. Who can blame them for placing the pleadings of wife and children above the cruel order of their superiors to remain at the front. Their fears were only too well founded, the threatened invasion came and some of the brave patriots who hastened home, fell in the fore front of the battle of that memorable year. Congress at last recognized the peril and ordered troops to Wyoming, but it was too late.

MASSACRE OF WYOMING.

Meanwhile as news of the invasion came, all was excitement in the Wyoming settlement and our pioneer mothers clasped their children in their arms and sought refuge in the stockades, trembling with dreadful apprehen-

sion. "Care sat on every brow and fear on many a heart too firm to allow a breath of apprehension to escape from the lips. The fields were waving with an abundant harvest, but the people were like a covey of partridges, cowering beneath a flock of blood scenting vultures, that soared above, ready to pounce on their prey; or like a flock of sheep huddled together in their pen, while the prowling wolves, already sent their impatient howl across the fields, eager for their victims."

It is not necessary to recount the already oft told story of the battle, other than to attempt to arrange the scanty material which is to be had concerning the part which the women took. It is related that after the enemy had invaded the valley, Daniel Ingersoll, who was at Wintermoot stockade, made preparations for resistance. His wife was cast in as heroic mold as himself and she seized the only weapon available, a pitchfork, to assist her husband. The Wintermoots at this juncture, suspected heretofore of sympathy with the British cause, now threw off their mask. Ingersoll was told that the British Butler would be a welcome visitor at the Wintermoot stockade, and releasing the wife, the husband was made a prisoner.

Forty Fort being the largest stockade in the valley, the women and children were there assembled. There they remained while the battle was in progress. As the brave defenders of the settlement marched out to the unequal conflict, their chief anxiety was for their wives and children.

"Men," said Col. Zebulon Butler, after he had formed the line of battle, "yonder is the enemy. The fate of the Hardings tells us what we have to expect if defeated. We come out to fight, not only for liberty, but for life itself, and what is dearer, to preserve our homes from conflagration, our women and children from the tomahawk. Every man to his duty."

Of the four hundred Connecticut men in the fight, less than one hundred came out alive. The British commander officially reported the taking of two hundred and twenty-

seven scalps, and some of the fugitives what had taken to the river were shot and their scalps not obtained.

At Forty Fort the bank of the Susquehanna was lined with trembling wives and mothers awaiting the issue. How their hearts must have been wrung with anguish as the distant firing subsided and they learned of the defeat from the rapidly increasing number of fugitives. No sooner had the tidings of the slaughter become known than the inhabitants of the settlement prepared for immediate flight. Such as were not ready to join the first fugitives sought refuge at the stockades, principally Forty Fort, where the women and children were guarded by Col. Denison's few soldiers. Many fled without waiting to prepare food, consequently great suffering ensued. The several paths to the eastward were crowded with terror stricken fugitives. There were four avenues of escape open to them:

1. The Warrior's Path, which left the lower part of the valley and crossing the mountain reached the settlements by the way of the Lehigh River. A party of one hundred women and children taking this route had but a single man to lead the way and otherwise protect them.

2. The route over the Wilkes-Barre Mountain and through the "Shades of Death," to the Delaware River, afterwards the Wilkes-Barre and Easton turnpike. Most of the fugitives took this route. This was one of the paths by which the settlers had come to the valley, and which was opened as a military road by Sullivan's army in the year following the battle.

3. To the Delaware by way of Cobb's Gap at Lackawaxen passing where Scranton now stands.

4. Perhaps a thousand persons went by boats or rafts or on land down the Susquehanna. A letter written to the Executive Council of Pennsylvania by William Maclay, nine days after the battle, contained these words: "At Sunbury I saw such scenes of distress as I never saw before. The river and roads leading down it were crowded with men, women and children fleeing for their lives."

The number of men, women and children who fled from Wyoming was not far from three thousand. "The terrible odds of the conflict," says Wilcox, "while not positively known, had been feared by all. And while husbands and fathers and sons made preparations for the battle, mothers and children anticipated the worst and prepared for flight."

Miner thus graphically recounts the start: "A few who had escaped came rushing into Wilkes-Barre fort, where trembling with anxiety the women and children were gathered awaiting the dread issue. The appalling news of the disaster proclaim their utter destitution. They fly to the mountains, evening is approaching, the victorious hell-hounds are opening on their track. They look back on the valley—all around the flames are kindling; they cast their eyes on the range of the battlefield; numerous fires speak their own horrid purpose. They loiter! The exulting yell of the savages strikes the ear! A shriek of agonizing woe! Who is the sufferer? Is it the husband of one who is gazing? The father of her children? Their flight was a scene of widespread and harrowing sorrow. Their dispersion being an hour of the wildest terror, the people were scattered singly, in pairs, in larger groups, as chance separated them or threw them together in that sad hour of distress. Yet the mind pictures to itself a single group, flying from the valley to the mountains on the east and climbing the steep ascent, hurrying onward, filled with terror, despair and sorrow. The affrighted mother whose husband had fallen—an infant on her bosom, a child by the hand, an aged parent slowly climbing the rugged steep behind; in the rustle of every leaf they hear the approaching savage, a dark and dreary wilderness is before them, their beloved valley all in flames behind them, their dwellings and harvests all swept away in this flood of ruin, the star of hope quenched in this blood shower of savage vengeance."

The widow Abbott and her nine children fled down the river to Catawissa and then taking to the mountains made their way, nearly three hundred miles, to their former home in Windham County, Conn.

More than twenty mothers were called on to lose two or more loved ones in the battle.

Some of these terror stricken women gave birth to children in their flight through the wilderness.

A Mrs. Truesdale was one of these. She and her babe were placed on a horse in a rude sling and compelled by force of circumstances to follow the flying throng. Mrs. Jabez Fish and her children hastened on, supposing her husband to have been killed. Overcome with fatigue and want her infant died. There was no way to dig a grave, and to leave it to be devoured by wolves seemed worse than death, so she took the dead babe in her arms and carried it twenty miles, when she came to a German settlement. Though poor they gave her food, decently buried the child and bade her welcome till she should be rested.

Mrs. Ebenezer Marcy was taken in labor in the wilderness and dragged herself along on foot until overtaken by a neighbor with a horse.

Mrs. Rogers, an aged woman from Plymouth, flying with her family, died in the mountains and was given burial there.

Mrs. Courtright related that she, a young girl, flying with her father's family, saw sitting by the roadside a widow who had learned of the death of her husband. Six children were on the ground near her. They were without food until she was seen by Matthias Hollenback, who had loaded his horse with bread at the settlement and was hastening toward Wyoming on one of the paths that the fugitives would be apt to take.

Among those who sought safety in flight was Mrs. Anderson Dana and her daughter, Mrs. Stephen Whiton, a bride of but a few days, who did not learn of the deaths of their husbands until they had arrived at Bullock's, where now stands the road-house known as Searfoss's, or Seven-Mile Jake's. It was there that many heard the dreadful details of the day's disaster, and learned for the first time as to who had fallen in the bloody battle. Mrs. Dana, not only had provided food for her flying family, but she carried with

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her many of her husband's valuable papers, he being engaged in the public business.

Among the fugitives was the family of Elisha Blackman. A daughter of the latter had lost her husband, Darius Spöfford, to whom she had but recently been married. Spöfford, mortally wounded, fell into the arms of his brother, Phineas. "Brother," he said, "I am mortally hurt. Take care of Lavina."

Picture if you can the dreadful anguish that wrung the heart of Mrs. Jonathan Weeks. Seven members of her household perished in the fight. Her sons, Philip, John, Bartholomew, Silas Benedict, husband of her grand-daughter, two relatives named Jabez Beers and Josiah Carman, and Robert Bates, a boarder, that night all lay dead on the field of battle. Mr. and Mrs. Weeks were allowed by the Indians to depart, but all their buildings were burned.

At Jenkins Fort the prisoners were searched and all valuables taken from them. Mrs. Richart says that Elizabeth, wife of John Gardner, had some silver spoons in her pocket. During the search she adroitly slipped them into the waistband of one of the men who had been searched. They are still kept as precious heirlooms by her descendants, the Polen family of Pittston.

We must not forget Mrs. Obadiah Gore, who had five sons and two sons-in-law in the battle. Her husband, too old to bear arms, was in the fort. At night five of the seven lay dead on the fatal field. Three of her sons were slain and two of her daughters were widows. One of the latter had an infant born soon after she reached Connecticut.

Mrs. Elihu Williams lost two sons in the battle and when a few weeks later her husband ventured back from Connecticut in the hope of saving a part of his harvest, he was killed by Indians. The widow was left with five children.

Mrs. John Abbott was similarly widowed at the same time by her husband falling by the side of Elihu Williams, a short distance above Mill Creek. She and her nine little

children subsequently returned and occupied the farm where her husband fell.

Mention should be made of Sarah, daughter of Dr. William Hooker Smith. She became the wife of James Sutton and it was to her vivid recollection of events that Miner was so much indebted for materials for his history of Wyoming. She was in the fort at the time of the battle. Her sister Susannah married Dr. Lemuel Gustin, who, like Dr. Smith, was one of the earliest physicians in the settlement, and she died a few days previous to the battle. You can see her epitaph in Forty Fort Cemetery.

Twelve women and children were accompanied through the wilderness by William Searle, whose wife and nine children comprised most of the party. They had been detained after the capitulation on the fourth until the seventh, and then given liberty to leave the settlement. They were a week getting to the Delaware, a distance of about sixty miles, and eighteen days passed before they reached their former homes in Stonington, Conn.

It is related that Mrs. Stephen Harding, whose two sons had been killed by the approaching savage horde the day before the battle, with her own hands prepared her dead sons for burial. The interment was witnessed by the British and Indians.

What a honey-moon was that of Bethia Harris, wife of Colonel Jenkins, whom she had married ten days before the massacre. She was left in Jenkins Fort when her husband hastened away to join the brave defenders at Forty Fort. Like all the other women the Indians robbed her of all her garments except chemise and petticoat. Under a flag of truce she went over the battle-field the day after the battle and found the dead body of her cousin Jonathan Otis, and also the husband of her cousin, Mercy Otis. The latter and her six children were among the fugitives to Connecticut. Mrs. Bethia Jenkins was a true patriot. She assisted the cause of liberty by molding bullets and helping to make powder for the use of the soldiers.

A story is told by Mrs. Richart which is too marvelous for ordinary belief. It is to the effect that Captain Stephen Gardner's wife had a vision in which their daughter in Connecticut, who had married just as they left for Wyoming, appeared to her with a babe in her arms. She said she herself was dead and she desired the baby to be given to the grandmother. As a sign of the reality of the vision she touched the wrist of the grandmother and left a mark thereon which could never be effaced. The grandmother went to Connecticut and found that every thing had happened as told in the vision. The child was gently reared by its pious grandmother and became the wife of a Methodist clergyman. Mrs. Richart informs us that this story of the supernatural is universally believed among all the numerous families descending from this godly grandmother.

After the surrender the Indians began to plunder, and the British colonel, John Butler, was unable to restrain them. A young woman at this juncture helped to save what little remained of the public funds. Growing more insolent, the savages seized Col. Denison's hat and then demanded his frock. In the pocket were what remained of the military funds of the settlement. Obligated to give it up under threat of being tomahawked, he slipped it over his head in such a way as to give a young woman of his family, who was present, an opportunity of adroitly taking out the purse and saving it from the insolent savage.

It was deemed best for Col. Zebulon Butler and the few surviving Revolutionary soldiers to hastily retire from the valley. The soldiers, who numbered only fourteen, withdrew down the river, while Col. Zebulon Butler took his wife on horseback behind him, and they made their escape across the mountains to the Lehigh by way of the Conyngham Valley. This was the wife of his second marriage, Lydia, daughter of Rev. Jacob Johnson. Not all the settlers succeeded in getting away at once and it is recorded that one hundred and eighty women and children with thirteen men, having been detained by the Indians and plundered, were sent off in one company a few days after the battle, suffer-

ing for shoes, clothing and food. In the meantime the Indians desolated the valley with the torch.

A farewell that wrung a woman's heart was that between John Gardner and his wife. He was to be carried into captivity and his wife and children were permitted to take leave of him. He was then led away, the Indians compelling him to carry a heavy load of plunder, which afterwards proved too great for his strength. As if to punish him for his bodily weakness, and perhaps afraid that he would be a hindrance, he was turned over to the squaws, who tortured him to death with fire. This is vouched for by a fellow-captive, Daniel Carr.

As the savages withdrew from the valley, they left a trail of fire and blood. At Capouse, now Scranton, Mr. Hickman, his wife and child were slain.

Six miles up the Lackawanna lived two families, Leach and St. John. The men were killed. One of them was carrying a child, which, with strange inconsistency, the Indian took up and handed to the mother, all covered with the father's blood. Scalping the men the Indians departed, leaving the agonized widows to make their way through the wilderness as best they could.

It was autumn before the dead could be buried. Indians continued to sweep down from the mountains and murder individual settlers, who had made so bold as to return in the hope of saving some of the crops. Among the atrocities was the butchery of the Utley family near Nescopeck, Nov. 19. Not only were the three men killed, but the savages murdered and scalped the aged mother.

The capture of Frances Slocum, the lost sister of Wyoming, properly belongs to this paper, but as it is such a familiar story, I will not go into details. Suffice it to say that three Indians, Nov. 2, 1778, came stealthily into the valley and approached the house occupied by the family of Jonathan Slocum, the site now being occupied by Lee's planing mill, corner of North and Canal streets. Having killed a young man of the household, named Nathan Kingsley, the Indians carried off little Frances, then a child of five years, whom

the mother was never to see again, and who was not to be found by her family until she was old and wrinkled, and so completely transformed into an Indian that she could not be persuaded to return to her brothers in civilization. In a little more than a month Mrs. Slocum lost her beloved child, her doorway had been drenched in blood by the murder of an inmate of the family, Nathan Kingsley, Jr., two others of the household had been taken away prisoners, and now her cup of bitterness was not only filled but made to overflow by the cruel killing of her father and father-in-law, (Isaac Tripp). Verily, says Miner, the annals of Indian atrocities written in blood, record few instances of desolation and woe equal to this.

Mrs. Thaddeus Williams, a Connecticut woman, whose family lived near the fort, had a narrow escape. Indians attacked the house and wounded her sick husband, but her sons made a gallant defense and repelled the savages.

With reference to the presence of Sullivan's army the following summer, there is little mention of women. The diaries of Sullivan's officers record that on July 13, 1779, the encampment was visited by Col. Butler, Capt. Spalding and several ladies. When Sullivan's army passed through Wyoming several widows applied to the commander for bread.

One September day (1779), when Sullivan's army was up in the Genesee region crushing the Six Nations, there came into his camp a white woman who had been captured by the Indians at Wyoming the previous year. She carried her babe with her. Her name has not come down to us. It was near there and at that time that Luke Swetland, another Wyoming captive, escaped from the Indians and made his way to Sullivan's camp.

Mrs. Mehitable Bidlack, who had lost a son, Capt. James Bidlack, in the Wyoming battle, applied to the war office to release from service her son Benjamin, then in the army, he being needed at home for her protection and support. The petition was refused on the ground that the public service required every available man.

In 1780 the Indians were again making incursions into Wyoming, bent on murder and pillage. Among the captives was Abram Pike, the famous Indian killer, who was taken while he and his wife were in the woods making sugar. Pike was carried off, but his wife and child were allowed to go to the settlements. It was her husband and Moses Van Campen who rose on their captors one night, killed several and made their escape.

One of the most distressing of our Wyoming tragedies is that in which the wife of Lieut. Rosewell Franklin of Hanover Township figures as a central victim. It was in the spring of 1782. The Indians, who several months before had carried two of her sons into captivity, again made a raid on Hanover Township and carried off Mrs. Franklin and her four remaining children, first burning the house to ashes. The marauding Indians were pursued as quickly as a party could be formed and they were overtaken about sixty miles up the river. In the encounter which ensued the Indians shot Mrs. Franklin to death and made off with the baby, the three other children escaping to their rescuers. Mrs. Franklin was buried in the woods and the baby was never heard of after.

In October, 1780, the settlement witnessed an event that caused great joy and festivity. It was the marriage of Naomi Sill (sister of Mrs. Col. Denison), to Capt. John Paul Schott, who was stationed at Wyoming with his rifle corps. In accordance with the custom, the bans had previously been published. A few months later, January, 1781, the bans were again published, this time for Joseph Kinney and Sarah Spalding. The bride was the daughter of Simon Spalding, captain of the Connecticut Independent Company. It may be said of the groom that he was wont to controvert the idea that the sun was a ball of fire, whose heat could be radiated to give warmth to the distant planets. It is worthy of note that his view has its defenders to-day.

It is interesting to note that in the assessment for 1781 only two owners of watches are returned, and one of these is

a woman, Sarah Durkee. The other fortunate possessor of a time-piece was Capt. John Franklin. Each watch was valued at one and a half pounds.

The summer of 1781 was made memorable by an outbreak of typhus fever, which, added to the commonly prevalent malarial fevers, made many a housewife's heart ache. Among the pioneer women who fell victims to the dreaded typhus was Lydia, the second wife of Col. Zebulon Butler.

June 9, 1781, a party of twelve Indians made an attack on a blockhouse at Buttonwood in Hanover Township, three miles below the Wilkes-Barre Fort. In the gallant defense the women aided the men with alacrity and spirit.

That domestic life was even in those early days not always blissful is shown by the fact that one pioneer woman in 1781 obtained a divorce from her husband.

Women had to insist on their rights. One Susannah Reynolds (whose husband Christopher, is said by Miner, to have been killed in the battle of 1778) had an action brought against her by Jabez Sill to recover a property upon which it was alleged she was a trespasser, but the court, whether from considerations of justice or gallantry we do not know, decided that the property was hers.

In July, 1781, Mrs. George Larned was carried into captivity from her home, on what was afterwards the Easton turnpike, leading from Wilkes-Barre to the Delaware. The agonized woman had seen the savages kill and scalp her husband, George Larned and his father, and her own baby, an infant of four months, had been torn from her arms and killed before her very eyes.

Throughout the entire Revolutionary war Indians devastated Wyoming Valley with fire and hatchet, but the close of that great struggle witnessed no cessation of suffering for the Connecticut settlers. The Proprietary Government, which no longer had to fight a foreign enemy, now turned with ferocity upon the Connecticut settlers, who were already impoverished by war. But instead of pitying them in their



distress, the entire power of Pennsylvania was turned against them after the prolonged strife was supposed to be ended by the Decree of Trenton in December, 1783. Petition to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania was in vain. "Our houses are desolate," they said, many mothers are childless, widows and orphans are multiplied, our habitations are destroyed and many families are reduced to beggary." The Assembly replied by sending more troops to oppress their already sadly harrassed people. They were told they must give up their lands, though a concession was made that the widows of those who had been killed by the savages might retain possession for two years, at the end of which time they must vacate. The women of Wyoming were even subjected to the hardship of having the soldiers billeted upon them. Mrs. Col. Zebulon Butler (his third wife, Phoebe Haight, whom he married in Connecticut a year before,) was compelled to board twenty of the troops. But the climax of the Pennamite cruelty was reached in May, 1784, when the soldiery obliterated the Connecticut boundaries by destroying the fences and at the point of the bayonet dispossessed all the Connecticut claimants. "Unable to make any resistance the people implored for leave to remove either up or down the river in boats, as, with their wives and children, it would be impossible to travel on the bad roads of that day. Their request was refused and they were compelled to go across to the Delaware through sixty miles of wilderness. About five hundred men, women and children thus made their way to Connecticut, mostly on foot, the road being impassable for wagons. Mothers, carrying their infants, literally waded streams, the water reaching to their armpits. Old men hobbled along on canes and crutches. Little children, tired with traveling, crying to their mothers for bread, which they could not give them, sunk from exhaustion into slumber, while the mothers could only shed tears of sorrow and compassion, till in sleep they forgot their griefs and cares. One child died and the mother buried it beneath a log." Seven long days and nights were occupied in making the sixty miles to the Delaware. When reached this was less than half way to the nearest border of Connecticut.

Years ago, when the old burying ground on Market street was abandoned, there was found what is the oldest grave stone of which we have any record. It was a rude mountain stone and marked the grave of a pioneer woman of Wyoming. It was deposited in the Historical Society, but cannot now be found. Fortunately I took a copy of it and this early epitaph read as follows:

HERE LISE
THE BODDEY OF
ELIZABETH
PARKS SHE
DIED MAY THE
7th A. D., 1776
AGED 24.

It would be interesting to know who she was.

There was a William Park, a brother-in-law of Capt. Obadiah Gore, who came to Wyoming with the Connecticut settlers in 1769. The family was from Plainfield. Some matter concerning the Park family is found in the Harvey Book, page 307.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

The prevailing characteristics of the pioneer women of Wyoming were industry and frugality. Labor was honorable in all and there were few, if any, artificial distinctions. Each woman was as good as her neighbor, provided she behaved as well. Nearly all the people were farmers and in the earlier days each housewife had to depend largely on herself for articles necessary to family use. The men raised flax and wool and the women dressed it, spun it and wove it. Each family became a little manufacturing center for making materials suitable for clothing and we may imagine how the women vied with one another in spinning, weaving, dyeing and in making the materials into clothing, linen, bedding and other necessary articles. Nearly every family had its patch of flax and in the fall came the pulling, rotting break-

ing, swingling and combing. Without this homemade linen they could not have sheets, or pillowslips, or towels, or handkerchiefs, or shirts or dresses. Many women took in flax to spin and the buzzing of the linen-wheel was music in the humble kitchen. Neighbors often carried their linen-wheels and flax when they went visiting. When the cloth was woven it was bucked and belted with a wooden beetle on a smooth flat stone, then it was washed and spread out on the grass or bushes to bleach. Sometimes young women made "all tow," "tow and linen," or "all linen stuff," to barter for their wedding outfits.

The women carded wool with hand cards and in order to lighten their burden and furnish social diversion resort was had to "carding bees," or "wool breakings." It was woven in hand looms. The common color was "sheep's grey," the wool of a black sheep and that of a white one being carded, spun and woven together. This was used mostly for men's wear. Out of the finer wool could be made gowns and undergarments for the women and children. The women in winter wore a heavy woolen cloth called baize, dyed with green or red. Sometimes they made heavy waled cloth and dyed it with bark at home. Later indigo came as a great convenience and the blue frock was the best and handiest of garments. It was whole in front, put on over the head, came below the knees and was gathered about the waist with a belt. So generally was it worn that it was said that when the minister prayed at town meeting a square acre of blue frocking rose up before him. If the housewife was not skilled in making garments she could get help from the itinerant tailor, who was an adept at cutting and fitting. There were also itinerant cobblers, who carried their kits about the country making or repairing shoes. The pioneer mother made for her husband and sons caps of the pelts of rabbits, woodchucks or other animals and lappets were sewed on to protect the ears. Occasionally a hat was made of home-made felt.

Neatness was the characteristic of the early Wyoming home. The floors, after they were so far advanced as to

get smooth floors, were scoured white and kept sanded. The shelves gleamed with mugs, basins and platters, all of shining pewter scoured with rushes. Their home-made towels, sheets and pillow cases were of spotless purity. In the yawning fire place were crane and andirons and pothooks.

Of paint there was none. Earthenware had to be brought from England and was rare. To meet this want home-made wooden ware was largely in use, turned with lathes.

The walls, mostly of logs, were unadorned with pictures. In their stead the powder-horn and leather shot-bag hung on their pegs, and the shot gun rested in the forked branches of a deer's horns, fastened up with wooden pins. Overhead supported by iron hooks in the beams were poles on which were hung hats, stockings, mittens, cloth and yarn. In the autumn they were festooned with strings of quartered apples or cubes of pumpkin.

The water had to be brought from well or spring. Fires were not easily kindled or kept. There were no friction matches. Each night before retiring some live hardwood coals must be buried in the ashes. Should there be no live embers in the morning, they had to be obtained from some neighbor, often at a considerable distance. With a live coal and some dry kindlings and bellows it was an easy matter to quickly obtain a roaring fire. If the live coal was not obtainable recourse must be had to the flint and steel tinder box, reinforced perhaps by a few shavings previously dipped in melted brimstone. How they managed in midwinter, with only a single open fire, to keep from freezing will ever remain a mystery. What little light was needed, when people went to bed so early, was obtained from tallow dips, though many a family had not even these and must depend on the light from the hearth. Many a studious youth has gotten his inspiration from the generous blaze of the open fire. It is said of these open fire places that they carried the greater part of the heat up the chimney and when the wind was wrong sent half the smoke into the room.

Clocks and watches were scarce. Some people had sun dials and others built their houses square with the sun that they might always be certain of the noon hour.

Each family had to depend on itself for tallow, beeswax, cider and soft soap and each was expected to take turn in entertaining the school master when he went boarding round.

The women and girls could drive oxen, hold plow, plant potatoes, hoe corn and cut kindling wood as well as the men when occasion required.

At first the facilities for cooking were very primitive, and cooking had to be done at the open fire places, for as yet there were no stoves. From an iron crane in the fire place hung pots and kettles for boiling. Frying was done in a pan over a bed of hot coals raked out upon the hearth. Bread was often baked in a kettle.

Venison, bear, woodchuck, wild turkey or domestic meat was roasted in front of the open fire, suspended from a stout cord attached to the mantel piece, a dripping pan placed below to catch the savory juices. The housewife or one of her children revolved the meat, so as to cook it evenly all around. Potatoes were roasted in the hot ashes. In the old brightly scoured tin kitchen johnny-cake was baked. Food was plain. Salt pork and potatoes were the staples. Shad was abundant. The housewife was often hard pushed to furnish a variety. Bean porridge was in great favor and it is recorded somewhere that when the goodman was going away in the winter to work with his team, the wife would make a bean porridge, freeze it, with a string, so he could hang it on one of the sled stakes, and when he was hungry he would break off a piece and eat it. Bread and milk or mush and milk were much used. In the earlier days there were few tablecloths, tumblers, cups or saucers and not many knives or forks.

Recreation was almost unknown and of amusements there were very few. Occasionally the young people had spelling matches, sugar boilings, husking frolics or apple cuts, rarely a dance, and the more staid of the matrons had tea drinking and quilting parties.

There was little or no money in circulation. Debts were paid in labor or farm produce and at long intervals accounts were rendered and the balance carried forward on the book until another reckoning was had.

In those days the pioneer mother usually had a large family and nearly always she was doctor, nurse, cook and teacher.

SOME REFLECTIONS.

It has not been convenient to weave into a connected whole the material which I have presented, and it is therefore a mere bundle of fragmentary jottings, not possessing even the merit of chronological order. It has been limited as far as could be, to the first settlement and to Wyoming's great tragedy of 1778, with special reference to the part which women played, though the general facts have been made familiar by historians and poets to all the world. It is by no means a complete recital of woman's work, in fact I have been embarrassed with a wealth of interesting materials from which to choose and found the difficulty to be in the task of condensation.

While we rehearse some of the privations of those stirring times we need not be ashamed of the fact that our recital deals largely with the annals of the poor. Our ancestors came to the Susquehanna with but little of this world's goods and they had to wrest a living from the soil and against the heavy odds of a hostile Proprietary Government, and an implacable savage foe. The stories of poverty and privations and the sorrows and sufferings which have come down to us, have doubtless not been exaggerated.

The vast deposits of coal which in our time have made this valley a busy hive of industry and brought millions of dollars of wealth and made us all a highly favored people were then unsuspected. Here in the wilderness of Pennsylvania our fathers planted a little republic that made and executed its own laws, a little republic whose allegiance to Connecticut brought on a civil strife which lasted nearly a third of a century and wet these fair plains many times with

the blood of patriots who were willing to die if need be for that home to which in the sight of God they felt they had a right to bring their wives and little ones. Though our present county of Luzerne is only a small portion of what was originally styled Wyoming, it yet has a population larger than that of either Delaware, Idaho, Montana, Nevada or Wyoming. Although our ancestors were poor, it does not follow that they were ignorant. On the contrary they were keen, intelligent, hardheaded men, who made the most of such advantages as they had. Their little libraries were well read, and as early as 1777 they established post routes between Wyoming and Connecticut for the carrying of letters and newspapers, one trip every two weeks, the same being maintained by private subscription. Stewart Pearce relates that during the Pennamite war, the wife of Lieutenant John Jameson left Wyoming for Easton, where her father, Major Prince Alden, and upwards of twenty other Connecticut settlers were held as prisoners. As there was no mail route, she secreted in her hair-dressing letters for the prisoners, and though intercepted on the way by Pennamite soldiers and examined, her precious consignment of letters escaped detection.

For years the pioneer women of Wyoming lived in constant fear of attacks from marauding bands of Indians. When their husbands went to the fields to work, carrying their guns with them, these mothers spent the hours in fear lest their protectors should be slain by Indians in ambush. We have seen how often this occurred and how the pioneer mother in our fair valley was never free from the haunting fear that her children might wander for a moment from her sight and fall a prey to savage cruelty.

Living as we do, surrounded by every comfort, we cannot realize the isolation and the self-dependence of our pioneer mothers. They had made the toilsome journey from Connecticut, through the forest to this promised land, over roads that were mere bridle paths and which had no bridges to span the streams. Almost no stores, few vehicles and only rare communication with the mother colony. She must

The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was the cold, crisp air. It was a relief after the warm, humid weather of the city. I looked up at the sky, which was a pale, hazy blue. The sun was just beginning to rise, casting a soft, golden glow over the landscape. In the distance, I could see the silhouettes of mountains, their peaks shrouded in mist. The sound of birds chirping and the gentle rustle of leaves filled the air, creating a peaceful atmosphere. I took a deep breath, savoring the fresh air. It felt like I had entered a new world, one where time seemed to stand still. I walked slowly, my feet crunching on the dry leaves underfoot. The path I was on was narrow and winding, leading me deeper into the woods. The trees were tall and slender, their branches reaching up towards the sky. The ground was covered in a thick layer of fallen leaves, their colors ranging from vibrant reds and oranges to muted browns and greys. I noticed a small stream flowing through the forest, its water clear and cold. The sound of the water flowing over rocks added to the serene soundscape. As I continued my walk, I began to notice the subtle changes in the environment. The air grew cooler, and the light became softer. I felt a sense of wonder and awe, marveling at the beauty of the natural world. It was a moment of pure tranquility, a chance to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life and connect with nature. I walked until I was tired, my legs aching from the long journey. I sat down on a large, mossy log, looking back at the path I had traveled. The sun was now higher in the sky, and the light was brighter. I felt a sense of accomplishment and peace, knowing that I had experienced something truly special. I stood up and continued my walk, my heart full of joy and gratitude. The world around me was a masterpiece of nature, and I was lucky enough to witness it all. I walked until the sun was high in the sky, and then I turned back, ready to face whatever came my way. The path was still there, leading me home. I walked slowly, savoring every moment. The air was still, and the light was soft. I felt a sense of calm and serenity, knowing that I had found what I was looking for. I walked until I was home, my heart full of peace and contentment. The world was still there, waiting for me. I walked slowly, savoring every moment. The air was still, and the light was soft. I felt a sense of calm and serenity, knowing that I had found what I was looking for. I walked until I was home, my heart full of peace and contentment. The world was still there, waiting for me.

provide her own remedies for times of sickness, supply her husband and children with garments of her own spinning and making, bake corn bread from meal of her own pounding and attend to a multitude of other domestic duties, and yet so little with which to do it all as to make us wonder how she ever did so much.

Words cannot adequately picture the privations of the pioneer women of Wyoming, and we do well to venerate their memories. It is to them we owe a debt of gratitude for having helped win from the wilderness such a heritage for us as that which we now possess. They died that we might live and we can best glorify their memory by emulating their virtues.

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